

# THE BOYS OF WAR

One more boy got dragged into the horror of our country's war on terror today: Tanner Speer, the 8 or 9 year old son of Christopher Speer, whose death Omar Khadr confessed to. Tanner's mother read a note the boy wrote for (I think) Memorial Day.

"Omar Khadr should go to jail because of the open hole he made in my family," wrote Tanner. "Army rocks. Bad guys stink."

Shortly thereafter, Khadr made an unsworn statement, confessing to killing Speer, but spending time too talking about his biggest dream, to get out of Gitmo, describing how he wanted to be a doctor to help heal the pain of others. He turned to Speer's widow and apologized for the pain he caused her family; the widow shook her head no in response.

"I'm really, really sorry for the pain I've caused you and your family. I wish I could do something that would take this pain away from you," he said, standing in the witness box and looking at the widow of U.S. Delta Force soldier Christopher Speer.

Also today, Josh Rogin got a copy of the memo the State Department wrote explaining why the US needed to tolerate Yemen's recruitment of 15 year old boys—the same age Khadr was when we captured him.

Imposing the section 404(a) prohibition against Yemen at this time would harm the cooperative relationship we have begun to rebuild with Yemen at a pivotal point in the fight against terrorism and have a negative impact on U.S. national security.

[snip]

Cutting off assistance would seriously jeopardize the Yemeni Government's capability to conduct special operations and counterterrorism missions, and create a dangerous level of instability in the country and the region.

It's not enough for the Speers apparently, for Khadr to apologize. Because that won't fix the hole in the Speer family.

I believe that, and I am sorry for their loss.

But these boys conscripted by all sides into the war on terror are not the ones putting the holes in families.